

Executive Summary
Self-Assessment Report (SAR) of Program
Associate Degree of Database Management System
Directorate of Quality Enhancement (DQE)
Virtual University of Pakistan

The Virtual University of Pakistan was established in 2002 intending to provide extremely affordable world-class education to aspiring students all over the country regardless of their physical location. The University also aimed to alleviate the lack of capacity in the existing universities while simultaneously tackling the acute shortage of qualified professors in the country using free-to-air satellite television broadcasts and the Internet. To pursue this aim, the Department of Computer Sciences is designated to initiate and implement the Self-Assessment process designed by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) of HEC. The current document summarizes the findings of the self-assessment process completed during the assessment period **July 2020 – June 2021 (Cycle – 2)** for the Associate Degree program in Database Management System.

The department is committed to producing graduates who can lead organizations towards success and prosperity in the global marketplace. The department follows its vision in all of its courses and areas of specialization offered at both Masters and Bachelors levels. The department feels satisfied upon completion of the following list of tasks:

1. The development of ***Self-Assessment Report (SAR)*** by a Program Team constituted for **Associate Degree of Database Management System**.
2. The conduct of critical review and submission of ***Assessment Report (AR)*** by an Assessment Team for Associate Degree of Database Management System.
3. Development of a ***Rectification Plan*** by Head of Department

The tasks were completed according to the set methodology through Program and Assessment Teams nominated by the Rector on the recommendation of the Department.

Methodology

The following methodology is adopted to complete the whole SAR cycle:

1. A Program Team (PT) was nominated for the program. Initial orientation and training sessions for all members were arranged by DQE. The composition of PT is given below:

Table 1: Program Team

Name	Designation
Rizwan Riaz Mir, Tutor	Instructor (Department of Computer Sciences)

2. All the relevant material such as the SAR manual, survey forms, etc. was provided to PT.

3. Continuous support, guidance, and feedback were provided to PT members to prepare the SAR for the said program.
4. After completion and submission of the final SAR by PT, an Assessment Team (AT) was formed by the Rector on the recommendation of the Department. The composition of AT is given below:

Table 2: Assessment Team

Name	Designation
Asma Batool	Assistant Professor (Department of Computer Science)

5. The SAR developed by PT was forwarded to AT for critical review.
6. After completion of the critical review and assessment of the SAR, AT members visited the department and had a meeting with PT.
7. After the visit, AT submitted a report and feedback form (Rubric Form) to DQE.
8. DQE forwarded the observations & findings of AT report to the Head of Department for developing a rectification plan.
9. DQE will now monitor the implementation of the Rectification Plan.

Parameters for the SAR:

The SAR is prepared on the following eight (8) criteria prescribed by the HEC:

- Criterion 1: Program Mission, Objectives and Outcomes Criterion
- Criterion 2: Curriculum Design and Organization Criterion
- Criterion 3: Laboratory and Computing Facility Criterion
- Criterion 4: Student Support and Advising Criterion
- Criterion 5: Process Control Criterion
- Criterion 6: Faculty Criterion
- Criterion 7: Institutional Facilities Criterion
- Criterion 8: Institutional Support

Key Findings of the SAR:

Following is the summary of the key SAR findings:

1. Currently, the program's mission is missing in the SAR document. There is a need to formulate and publish the mission statement, learning objectives, and outcomes of the program.
2. The mapping of learning objectives and outcomes is inconsistent.
3. In the program, the Islamic studies course of a 1-credit hour is being offered in contrast to HEC guidelines that recommend a course of 2-credit hours.

4. The mapping of the programs' learning objectives (PLOs) and programs' educational outcomes (PEOs) needs revision on a priority basis.
5. Physical inspection of infrastructure and facilities at VU campuses is not possible, therefore VU should adopt a mechanism of periodic audits and make available the audit reports to AT as a piece of evidence.
6. HEC explicitly categorizes various courses into groups such as Compulsory, Foundation, Major, and Domain Electives. However, the aforementioned course categorizations have not been found in any study scheme. The only terms used in study schemes are "Required" and "Elective" (available at the main website of VU) which are inappropriate and uncommon for academicians.
7. The Employers' survey needs to be conducted to know about the quality of the program.
8. The student-teacher interaction is limited in online education, which is substituted by modern ICT tools like Skype, Adobe, Zoom. The total count of such sessions along with participants' attendance is unavailable. The feedback of students on the effectiveness of these tools and the quality of such interactions is also required.
9. All programs are skilled-based; however, the specific skill each department wants to inculcate is not identifiable, and therefore it is hard to measure the learning outcome of these programs.
10. The outlook of few programs is theoretical rather than it should be skill-oriented.
11. According to AT, the required formal career counseling for students is not sufficient. For career counseling of students, seminars and workshops should be organized at least once a semester, and experts from industries and organizations should be invited for live interaction and discussion.
12. There is a need for devising a standard faculty development policy and providing them with job security (regularization) as well as other benefits as per rules of public sector Universities.

Conclusion and Recommendations:

While analyzing the Rubric proforma provided by HEC for Self-Assessment, it has been found that the performance of the department is relatively good. AT awarded an overall assessment score (75/100).

In the report, need improvement areas are identified by AT. Criterion # 8 is rated low and becomes a major reason for this score. The criterion is about 'Institutional Support' which is about the retention of quality faculty members. The response of AT reflected that they are not satisfied with the existing incentive plan to retain quality faculty. The shortage of Ph.D. faculty

members, the contribution of faculty members for scholarly activities, and the limited access to digital resources and physical libraries are other areas about which AT has shown concerns.

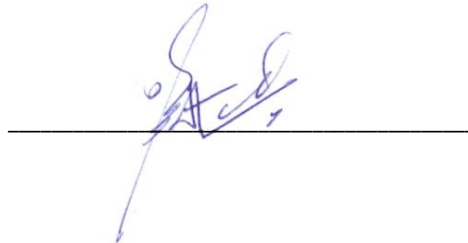
The Need Improvement areas identified during the self-assessment process have been reported to the Head of the respective Department and specific rectifications have also been requested. DQE will follow up on the implementation plan as per the specific time frame.

Prepared by:



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Director DQE:



The Rector:

